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Hilsman Denies Policy Dispute Led To Resignation; Successor Is Sought

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By Murrey Marder
Staff Reporter

A successor to Assistant Secretary of State Roger Hilsman is still being sought, Administration officials said yesterday.

Hilsman, whose resignation was precipitously announced by the White House Tuesday night, when news of it leaked to the press, hopes to leave his post as early as possible.

But no departure date has yet been agreed.

"No policy dispute" was involved in the resignation, Hilsman vigorously maintained yesterday. He said it was only an "unfortunate coincidence" that news of his resignation broke the day after the State Department announced that a new task force directly under Secretary of State Dean Rusk will direct U.S. policy on Viet-Nam.

Hilsman, however, has definitely had a less intimate working relationship with the Johnson Administration than he had with the late President Kennedy. This is often a vital factor in the decision-making processes. After Mr. Kennedy's death, Hilsman more seriously considered returning to academic life.

Mr. Kennedy, in 1961, helped convince Hilsman that he should stay on in Government for a while rather than accept an offer of a professorship at Yale, from which he holds a doctor's degree in international politics. More recently, Hilsman told associates, he received two other attractive university offers and informed President Johnson of his desire to leave the State Department.

Hilsman, before returning to academic interests, is eager to complete a book entitled "The Politics of Policy Making." It is a subject in which he has been deeply involved; the problems of his Far East domain, including Communist China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Laos, Viet-Nam, Malaysia and other trouble spots, have been steeped in politics of both the domestic and international varieties.

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